

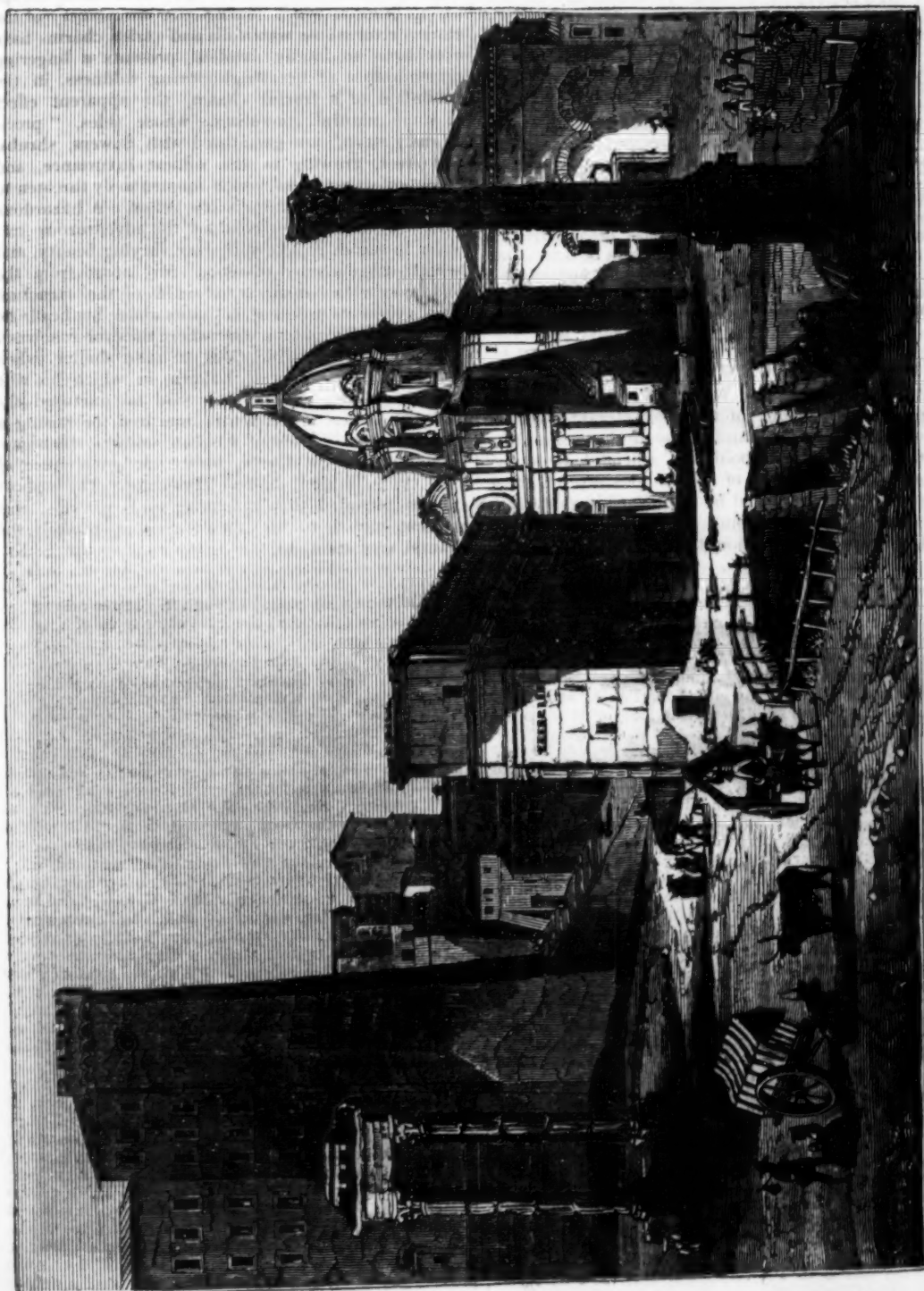
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THE NORTHERN ANGLE OF THE FORUM AT ROME, AND BACK OF THE MODERN CAPITOL.

Temple of Jupiter Tonans.

Arch of S. Severus.

Column of Phocas.

## SOME ACCOUNT OF THE CITY OF ROME.

## PART THE THIRD.

## THE GREAT FORUM OF ANCIENT ROME.

..... It was once,  
And long the centre of their universe,  
The Forum,—whence a mandate, eagle-winged,  
Went to the ends of the earth. Let us descend  
Slowly. At every step much may be lost.  
The very dust we tread stirs as with life;  
And not a breath but from the ground sends up  
Something of human grandeur.

..... We are come,—  
Are now where once the mightiest spirits met  
In terrible conflict; this, while Rome was free,  
The noblest theatre on this side heaven!

ROGERS.

Nothing more strongly marks the degradation of Rome, and the ravages which Time has made in this once mighty city, than the difficulty of fixing, even in a very general way, the limits of its celebrated Forum. Some scattered references in the pages of ancient writers, either to natural features which remain unchanged, or to architectural monuments of which a remnant has been identified, are all that we have to guide us in endeavouring to overcome that difficulty. We know that the Forum lay between the Capitoline and Palatine hills; and we infer, from the general statement of Vitruvius concerning the *fora* of Italian cities, that it was a rectangle, whose breadth equalled two-thirds of its length. The materials for fixing its limits with more precision are very scanty; we content ourselves with shortly describing them according to Nibby, —the best of modern authorities, merely premising that, as there is much uncertainty upon the subject, there has been, consequently, a great diversity of opinion.

The triple arch of Septimius Severus, seen in our engraving, in p. 33, as standing at the foot of the Capitoline hill, was within the ancient Forum, and indicates the immediate vicinity of its northern angle. Passing from this point by the side of the range of buildings on the right of our engraving, and continuing in that direction for some distance beyond the limit of our view, we come to the eastern angle, not far from the roots of the Palatine hill, and somewhere close to the modern church of *San Lorenzo in Miranda*, which is formed partly of the remains of the ancient temple of Antoninus and Faustina. A line joining these two points will mark the north-eastern boundary of the Forum, and being measured will give about 470 ancient feet for its breadth. Starting again from the arch of Severus, and proceeding along the base of the Capitoline hill, considerably beyond the limit of our view to the left, we come to the modern church *Della Consolazione*, in the neighbourhood of which is supposed to have been the western angle of the Forum; the line which we thus trace will be its north-western boundary, and will give 705 feet as the measure of its length. A similar line drawn parallel to this, along the base of the Palatine hill, will mark the south-eastern boundary of the Forum; it must commence at the eastern angle, (already found,) near the church of *San Lorenzo*, and will terminate, at the end of 705 feet, near the church of *San Teodoro*, or St. Theodore, which is thus regarded as the southern angle. To complete the circuit of the Forum, we have only to trace its south-western boundary; that will be done by joining its southern and its western angles, or, in other words, by drawing a line across the valley between the Palatine and Capitoline mounts, from the church of *San Teodoro* at the foot of the former, to the church *Della Consolazione* at the foot of the latter.

The figure thus described as affording a tolerable outline of the ancient Forum, will be a rectangle exceeding an eighth of a mile in length, and a twelfth in breadth, to speak roughly. The reader may perhaps observe, that this proportion is in conformity with the rule of Vitruvius already mentioned. That he may not be misled, he should be told that the coincidence is forced; in other words, that the quadrangle has been constructed according to the rule, from want of better data. That it should agree with the rule is thus matter of necessity; therefore, he must not regard the fact as in any wise confirming the accuracy of the limits laid down. Nor must he suppose, that the lines which we have easily traced upon paper, can be traced with

the same facility upon the soil, or that, if in Rome, he could tread with his feet those imaginary bounds which we have drawn with the pen. To what extent this might be done may be gathered hereafter; before it could be done completely, many obstructions must be removed. We may add, that the limits here assigned to the ancient Forum are those which it had under the empire. Nibby thinks that, in earlier times, it may have been larger, and that it became gradually contracted by successive encroachments.

The Forum was set apart by Romulus and Titus Tatius, the Sabine chief, whose care it was to cut down the trees which grew there, and fill up the marshes at the foot of the Capitoline hill. Tarquinius Priscus drained it more effectually by the aid of sewers, and parcelled out certain portions of it for private buildings; by him too it was adorned with porticoes and shops. We learn from Vitruvius that by the term *portico* we are not to understand a mere open colonnade, serving as a covered walk, but a place in which there were shops with apartments over them. He mentions particularly those of the *argentarii*, or bankers,—the *tabernæ argentariæ*, as Livy calls them; or, as an old translator quaintly says, "Goldsmiths' Row." It was these *tabernæ argentariæ* that Hannibal put up to auction among his troops, when he heard from a captive that the very field on which he lay encamped, only three miles from the walls of Rome, had just been sold in the city, "the price being nothing lessened on that account." It was among the owners of the same shops that the Dictator, Papirius Cursor, had distributed the splendid shields which he captured from the golden legion of the Samnites, 308 years before the Christian era; or, as an old translator of Livy says, "they were divided amongst the wardens of the Goldsmiths' Company, therewith to beautify the public market-place." Hence arose the custom which constantly prevailed afterwards, for the *Ædiles* to dress the Forum with ornaments on those days upon which, during the *Ludi Circenses*, the *theusæ*, (a kind of carriages conveying the statues of the gods,) passed through it. It was among the *argentariæ*, also, that the celebrated catastrophe of Virginia occurred,—where,

..... Holding up the knife—  
The knife that ran with blood, the blood of his own child,—  
Virginus called down vengeance.

## PUBLIC BUILDINGS, ETC. IN THE ANCIENT FORUM.

THE Forum was not entirely an open space; it had public buildings in it as well as around it; we even read of streets passing through it. The *Curia*, or Senate-house, stood near the foot of the Palatine hill, in about the middle of the eastern side of the Forum. It was built originally by Tullus Hostilius, the third king of Rome; and, after having been repaired by Sylla, was destroyed by fire in the year 53 B.C., when the body of Clodius, who had been murdered by Milo, was carried into it by a tumultuous mob, and there burnt on a funeral pile, formed of the benches of the senators, the tables, the archives, and such other materials as the place afforded. Sylla's son rebuilt it, but his personal enemy, Lepidus, pulled down the new edifice, under the false pretence of erecting a temple to "Felicity." It was again restored by Julius Cæsar, and, after him, called the *Curia Julia*, though the original name of *Curia Hostilia* was still applied to it sometimes.

On the same side of the Forum with the *Curia*, and a little to the north of it, was the *Comitium*, the uses of which we will shortly explain. An assembly of the Roman people, for the purpose of exercising their right of voting upon the different matters coming under their cognizance, was called *Comitia*, a compound word, literally signifying "goings together." These *Comitia* were held, as the phrase went, by some magistrate, who always summoned them, and presided in them. They were of three kinds, called, respectively, *Curiate*, *Centuriate*, and *Tribute*. The first were instituted by Romulus, who had divided the people into three tribes, and each tribe into three *Curia*,—a word which we cannot translate; they were called *Comitia Curiate* because the people voted in them not individually,

man by man, but by *Curia*. Though the number of the tribes was repeatedly changed, that of the *Curia* always remained the same; so that when the *Comitia Curiata* were held, the votes of sixteen, or any other majority of the thirty *Curia*, decided a question, and what that majority agreed upon was deemed an order of the whole people. These *Comitia Curiata* were partly superseded by the *Comitia Centuriata*, instituted by Servius Tullius, the sixth king of Rome, upon the basis of his celebrated census. That monarch having numbered his people, divided them into six classes, according to their respective fortunes, and each of these classes contained a number of *Centuria*, or, as we should say, "hundreds," though it is very clear that a *century* did not always consist of a hundred men. At the *Comitia Centuriata* the votes were taken by centuries,—that is to say, the individuals of each century voted in it by itself, and the decisions of the several centuries were collected; then whatsoever was the will of the majority of the 191 or 193 centuries (for the number is variously stated,) was held to be the determination of the people. The *Comitia Tributa* were instituted in the year 491 B.C.; the people voted in them by *tribes*, of which there were twenty-one at the time of their institution, but of which the number was afterwards increased, in consequence of the gradual addition of new citizens.

In the *Comitia Curiata* the aristocracy of birth was predominant; in the *Comitia Centuriata* the influence of wealth prevailed, for the first, or richest, of the six "classes" comprised more "centuries" than all the others put together. On the other hand, in the *Comitia Tributa*, which were an offspring of the spirit of democracy, neither birth nor fortune were of any advantage; the tribes were more equal divisions of the people than either the *Curia* or the centuries, and freely expressed, by a majority of their separate votes, the will of a majority of the citizens. From the time of Romulus to that of Servius Tullius, the whole power of the people was exercised in the *Comitia Curiata*. At the latter period the great bulk of it passed to the *Comitia Centuriata*, in which were elected, after the subversion of the kingly office, the consuls and the other greater magistrates, ordinary and extraordinary, and in which were made those enactments called "laws," which alone could bind the whole Roman people, until, in the progress of the democratic principle, the decrees of the *Comitia Tributa* acquired a similar force. The *Comitia Centuriata*, however, still retained the right of investing with military command, or *imperium*, those magistrates upon whom the *Comitia Centuriata* had already conferred civil power, or *potestas*; and so long as the republic lasted they enjoyed their religious functions, or the privilege of electing certain of the great ministers of religion. In other respects they had become little more than a name, long before the extinction of freedom.

The reader will now understand to what uses the *Comitium* was devoted, when we say that it was the "place of meeting" (as its name implies,) of the *Comitia Curiata*. It was originally an open space, elevated above the rest of the Forum; and Livy records the fact, that it was first covered "the year that Hannibal came into Italy," or 217 B.C. The edifice thus formed, was destroyed in the fire which consumed the Curia or Senate-house, when the body of Clodius was burnt there; its occupation was already gone, and we do not read of its having been restored. We read, however, in the reign of Domitian, of its being used as a place of execution; and from this, Nibby supposes that it must have been open at least to a great extent. Perhaps it never had more than a roof resting upon pillars. Close to it, however, stood the *Græcostasis* or *Græcostadium*, a hall in which foreign ambassadors awaited the replies of the Senate; and when this was rebuilt by Antoninus Pius after a destruction by fire, the Emperor is thought to have united it with the Comitium, so as to form of the two a single building, to which the name of either was afterwards indifferently applied. The Comitium was, in many respects, "sacred ground" to the ancient Romans. In it stood the celebrated fig-tree, called *Ficus ruminalis*, close to which, according to the cherished tradition, the infants Romulus and Remus had been exposed, at a time when the Tiber had overflowed its banks to the very foot of the Palatine, or upon the roots of which, when the waters receded, the wooden trough that held them had been overturned, and the royal children had been found by the she-wolf that reared them. In after-ages, the Romans distinguished the spot thus endeared to them, by placing on it a brazen image of the animal and her adopted progeny; and

many have thought that a brazen memorial of the same tradition, which is still preserved in the Capitoline Museum, is that identical image. Upon the steps of the Comitium, by the Senate-house, stood a statue, with the head veiled, of the celebrated augur Attius Navius, who *was said* (for ever, the credulous Livy qualifies the story with this expression,) to have cut in sunder a whetstone with a razor, to the astonishment of the King, Tarquinius Priscus, who had suggested the attempt in mockery of his art. The razor and whetstone themselves, were also *said* to have been buried in the place where the marvellous feat was performed.

When the probable position of the Senate-house and Comitium shall have been ascertained, the stranger may then hope to satisfy, in some degree, his curiosity upon a question, which, if he have anything of classical enthusiasm within him, will more than any other have occupied his thoughts, from the first moment of his entrance into the ancient "field of freedom, faction, fame, and blood."—Where stood the *Rostra*?

Whence spoke

They who harangued the people, turning now  
To the Twelve Tables, now with lifted hands  
To the Capitoline Jove, whose fulgent shape  
In the unclouded azure shone far off.  
And to the shepherd on the Alban Mount  
Seemed like a star new-risen? Where were ranged  
In rough array, as on their element,  
The beaks of those old galleys destined still  
To brave the brunt of war—at last to know  
A calm far worse—a silence as in death!

Not a vestige of the *Rostra* now remains; yet who would be content to leave the Forum, without endeavouring to satisfy himself of their probable position? Much of the pleasure to be derived from a visit to Rome, will spring from an acquaintance with the sites of monuments no longer existing, but inseparably associated with the most stirring scenes, in the most attractive period of its history; and where, in the whole of Rome, is the monument that can lay claim to that distinction so strongly as the *Rostra*,—whose very name has become an adopted word in half the languages of Europe? The industry and ingenuity of the antiquaries, has been patiently exercised in collecting and discussing the scattered notices in the pages of ancient writers; and the result is, that the celebrated tribunal whence the Roman orators addressed their fellow-citizens, may be safely placed a little in front of that corner of the Senate-house, which was contiguous to the Comitium,—thus, nearer to the Palatine than to the Capitoline hill, but still not very far from the centre of the Forum. It was originally called *templum*—a word which bore a wider signification with the Romans, than the corresponding expression of "temple" bears with us; it was applied, amongst other things, to any place which had been consecrated by the augurs, and to this ceremony the tribunal in the Forum had been submitted. In the year 335 B.C., the port of Antium, (now Porto d'Anzo,) on the coast of Latium was finally captured; the sea was interdicted to its inhabitants, and their galleys being seized, a part were taken entire to Rome, and the *Rostra* (or metal beaks, on the prows,) of the rest, being carried thither also, were fixed as a trophy, to the consecrated tribunal in the Forum. Henceforth, the common name of that tribunal became *Rostra*, though its ancient appellation was not wholly lost. There are still extant medals on which its figure is stamped; from them we learn that its upper part was square, and that it rested upon a circular pedestal, from out of which the "beaks" projected prominently.

Near the *Rostra* stood the statues of several Romans, who had been put to death while serving their country in the capacity of ambassadors. One of the celebrated "Philippics," of Cicero, seems to have been delivered for the purpose of inducing the Senate to decree a similar memorial to Servius Sulpicius, who had "died," (not been "put to death") while engaged in an embassy from the Senatorial party in Rome, to Antony, in the North of Italy, soon after the commencement of the struggle which followed the assassination of Julius Cæsar. The orator there mentions four such statues which had stood by the *Rostra* within the recollection of those whom he addressed, and a fifth, which was still to be seen at the time he spoke. It was not long afterwards that Cicero was murdered in the proscription which followed the union of Octavius and Lepidus with Antony; and that his bloody head and hands being conveyed to Rome, were affixed to the *Rostra*, by order of Antony. There were then, however, two



tribunals so called in the Forum; for Julius Cæsar had erected a second near its southern angle, close under the Palatine hill. It is sometimes said, that he removed the *Rostra* from their ancient position; but as we afterwards read of the "old," and the "new," or "Julian," *Rostra*, this is evidently a mistake.

Of the other monuments of the Forum, our limits forbid us to say much. There were several temples and basilicas among the buildings which surrounded them. The term *basilica* was applied by the ancient Romans to large edifices, in which various kinds of public business was conducted. In their general arrangement they bore a considerable resemblance to some of our churches, their principal feature being a central hall (or "nave") resting on pillars, with porticoes on either side, corresponding to what we call "aisles." On the same side of the Forum as the *Comitium* and Senate-house, and close to the Palatine hill therefore, were the *Basilica Porcia*, which was destroyed by fire when the body of Clodius was burnt,—a temple of Castor,—and a round temple, by some assigned to Vesta, by others to Romulus, and now converted into the modern church of St. Theodore. On the contiguous south-western side, were a temple of Julius Cæsar,—a *Basilica Julia*,—a temple of Ops and Saturn,—and the entrances of three streets. At the western angle began that ascent to the Capitoline hill, which was called the "hundred steps of the Tarpeian rock;" and along the base of the same hill, were a temple of Saturn,—the arch of Tiberius, from which started one branch of the ascent called the *Clivus Capitolinus*,—a temple of Vespasian,—and the *Schola Xantha*, an edifice for "notaries and copyists," as Vasi says,—and the arch of Septimius Severus, at which commenced the other branch of the *Clivus Capitolinus*, and also the ascent called the *Clivus Asyli*. On the remaining, or north-eastern side of the Forum, was the *Secretarium Senatus*, used for the more important trials at which the senators assisted, one or two *basilicæ*, and some shops; and at the eastern angle was the arch of Fabius, already mentioned. This is by no means a perfect list; and many of the articles in it are still the subject of dispute.

#### THE MODERN FORUM.

Now all is changed! and here, as in the wild,  
The day is silent, dreary as the night;  
None stirring, save the herdsman and his herd,  
Savage alike; or they that would explore,  
Discuss and learnedly; or they that come  
(And there are many who have crossed the earth)  
That they may give the hours to meditation,  
And wander, often saying to themselves,  
"This was the Roman Forum."

A PART only of the Ancient Forum is now an open space—or at least free from buildings; this is the northern half, (roughly speaking,) of which a portion is seen in our engraving. The southern half is closely covered with modern structures of a very humble character. As if to make amends for this loss, the part still exposed has been prolonged for a considerable distance towards the east, by the northern side of the Palatine hill. In ancient times, a spectator standing by the arch of Septimius Severus with his back to the Capitol, would have been at the corner of a broad rectangle, extending more than 700 feet in length upon his right, and two-thirds of that distance in his front. A spectator similarly placed at the present day, looks in vain for that rectangle; on his right, instead of the straight line which anciently bounded the view in that direction at the regular distance of 700 feet, his eye is stopped before it can range beyond one half of that extent, and in some parts much sooner, by irregular masses of modern building. In his front, however, instead of resting at the distance of 470 feet upon the limit of the Ancient Forum, it stretches uninterruptedly beyond that distance, for a quarter of a mile, the open space which it surveys, gradually diminishing in breadth as it recedes, until it approaches the Colosseum in the form of a road. It would seem, indeed, to use a fanciful illustration, as if the broad area of the Ancient Forum had been partly pushed from between the Palatine and Capitoline hills, and forced to extend itself in a narrow strip along the north-eastern side of the former. The name of the open space thus seen at the present day, is *Campo Vaccino*, or "Cow-field."

"After the fall of Rome," says Vasi, "and particularly in the year 1084, when Robert Guiscard visited the city, this spot, so famous, was despoiled of all its ornaments; and the buildings having been in great part ruined, it has served from that time to our days, as a market for oxen

and cows, whence is derived the name of *Campo Vaccino* (cow-field), under which it was lately known. At the present day, however, it has lost that vile denomination, and obtained again the appellation of *Forum Romanum*." Mr. Woods, however, says that it was called *Campo Vaccino* not as being the market, but as the place where the long-horned oxen, which have drawn the carts of the country-people to Rome, wait till their masters are ready to go back again. Vasi is mistaken, in saying that "this vile denomination" has been lost; it never will be lost—it is too accurately descriptive—it tells the tale of degradation too well, not to last as long as the Forum remains. Nor would it be correct to call the space marked *Campo Vaccino*, in the modern maps of Rome, by the name of *Forum Romanum*,—or *Foro Romano*, to use the Italian form. The *Campo Vaccino* is a much larger space than the existing remnant of the Ancient Forum; and though it is quite correct to call that remnant a part of the *Campo Vaccino*, yet to call the *Campo Vaccino* the *Forum Romanum*, would give rise to very incorrect notions concerning the limits and site of the Ancient Forum.

The Forum is characterized by Dr. Burton as, perhaps, the most melancholy object which Rome contains within its walls. "We may lament the ruin of a temple or a palace, but our interest in the remaining fragments is frequently diminished by our either not knowing with certainty to what building they belonged, or because history has not stamped them with any peculiar recollections. But standing upon the hill of the Capitol, and looking down upon the Forum, we contemplate a scene with which we fancy ourselves familiar, and we seem suddenly to have quitted the habitations of living men. Not only is its former grandeur utterly annihilated, but the ground has not been applied to any other purpose. When we descend into it, we find that many of the ancient buildings are buried under irregular heaps of soil; and a warm imagination might fancy that some spell hung over the spot, forbidding it to be profaned by the ordinary occupations of inhabited cities. What Virgil says of its appearance before the Trojan settlers arrived, is singularly true at the present moment.

There oxen stalled where palaces are raised,  
And bellowing herds in the proud Forum grazed.

"Where the Roman people saw temples erected to perpetuate their exploits, and where the Roman nobles vied with each other in the magnificence of their dwellings, we now see a few insulated pillars standing among some broken arches. Or, if the curiosity of foreigners has investigated what the natives neither think nor care about, we may perhaps see the remnant of a statue or a column extracted from the rubbish. Where the comitia were held, where Cicero harangued, and where the triumphal processions passed, we have now no animated beings except strangers attracted by curiosity, the convicts who are employed in excavating as a punishment, and those more harmless animals who find a scanty pasture and a shelter from the sun under a grove of trees. If we look to the boundaries of this desolation, the prospect is equally mournful. At one end we have the hill of the Capitol, on the summit of which, instead of the temple of Jupiter, the wonder of the world, we have the palace of the solitary 'Senator.' If we wish to ascend this eminence, we have on one side the most ancient structure in Rome, and that a prison\*; on the other, the ruins of a temple, which seems to have been among the finest in the city, and the name of which is not known. If we turn from the Capitol, we have on our right the Palatine hill, which once contained the whole Roman people, and which was afterwards insufficient for the house of one emperor, and is now occupied by a few gardens and a convent. On the left, there is a range of churches, formed out of ancient temples; and in front, we discover at a considerable distance, through the branches of trees, and the ruins of buildings, the mouldering arches of the Colosseum."

#### THE ARCH OF SEPTIMIUS SEVERUS.

Of the ancient remains in the Forum, the most extensive is the arch of Septimius Severus, which we have already spoken of, as indicating the northern angle of the Ancient

\* See *Saturday Magazine*, Vol. IX., p. 213. In our engraving the reader will perceive this ascent; the low building on its right,—just emerging from behind the arch of Severus,—is the prison in question and the church above it; the tall massive edifice on the left, is a part of the back of the palace of the "Senator." The temple alluded to, is beyond the limit of our view.

Forum, and which forms a prominent feature in our engraving. The reader will perceive that it is a triple arch—that is to say, that it consists of three arches, a large one in the middle, and a smaller one on each side; there is a lateral communication between them. "These triumphal arches," says Mr. Woods, "are not in a very pure style of architecture, but they are rich and handsome objects; four projecting columns adorn each face, and the entablature breaks around each of them." Above the columns are supposed to have been statues; while on the top, as we learn from coins, was a car drawn by six horses abreast, containing two persons in it, and having on each side an attendant on horseback, followed by one on foot. The material of the arch is marble; and each front is covered, between the columns, with bas-reliefs.

The arch was erected in honour of the Emperor Septimius Severus, and his two sons, Caracalla and Geta, to commemorate two triumphs on account of victories over the Parthians. "We know from history," says Dr. Burton, "that he made two expeditions into the East: the first in 195, when he conquered King Vologeses; the second in 199, when he took Ctesiphon, and the treasures of King Artabanus. The circumstance of his being twice styled *PARTHICUS*, in the inscription, seems to point out two expeditions and two triumphs. Spartian tells us distinctly, that he triumphed after the first expedition, but refused the honour the second time, because he had the gout. His son triumphed in his stead; and it was upon this occasion that the arch was erected; or, perhaps, it was deferred till the year 205, when the *Ludi Sæculares*\* were celebrated." The same inscription is placed on each front of the arch; but the name of Geta is not found in it, although the arch was erected to the two sons and the father. The eldest son is mentioned under his real name, of M. Aurelius Antoninus; the nickname of Caracalla, or Caracallus, having been given to him as a term of reproach, from the circumstance of his introducing at Rome, certain long Gaulish garments, so called, which he obliged all those who came near his person to adopt. It seems pretty certain, that the name of Geta originally formed part of the inscription; he was murdered by his brother Caracalla, the year following the death of their father, and the well-known anxiety of the murderer to remove from the world whatever could remind him of his guilt, or recall the memory of his victim, led in all probability to the erasure of Geta's name. The usual method of affixing these inscriptions, was first to cut the letters in the stone, and then to fasten in other letters, cast in metal. The metallic letters have been carried off from this inscription, as from almost every other; but from this very circumstance we are enabled to ascertain, that in the seventh line there were once different words from those which now appear. The marble is depressed along the whole of that line, thus showing that something has been cut away; the holes, too, in which the first metallic letters were affixed, still remain, and by tracing them, the original inscription has been supplied with sufficient certainty to restore the name of Geta.

The bas-reliefs which adorn the two faces of this arch, illustrate the campaigns and triumphs in commemoration of which it was erected. "The whole series," says Dr. Burton, "is in an indifferent style of sculpture, and presents but a poor idea of the state of the arts at that time." Mr. Woods speaks of them as now much decayed, and "probably always very bad both in design and execution, yet contributing to the magnificence of the edifice." The arch itself was half buried so late as the year 1803. Several excavations had been made, but the loose soil had slipped down, and quickly filled them up again. Pope Pius the Seventh was more successful in the attempt than his predecessors had been; and by the year 1804 the whole arch had been uncovered, and laid open down to the bottom. A wall has been built around the excavated area, for the better preservation of the monument; and the spectator, who stands upon the soil of the Forum, looks down upon that area, from a height of five-and-twenty feet, upon the side turned towards the Capitol, and fifteen feet upon the other. Within the arch there is a marble staircase, leading by fifty steps to the summit.

This arch stood at the commencement of that ascent to the Capitol which was called the *Clivus Asyli*, because it led to the Asylum, or Sanctuary, instituted by Romulus. When the excavation was made in 1804, the pavement of this ascent was discovered. The arch of Severus was also

the starting-point of one of the branches of the *Clivus Capitolinus*, upon which excavations have been carried on of late years; Sir William Gell speaks of it as being "narrow and ill-paved."

#### THE PILLAR, OR COLUMN OF PHOCAS.

UPON the extreme right of our view of the Forum, the reader will perceive a solitary column, which long afforded to the antiquaries as ample a fund for discussion as any other relic within the walls of ancient Rome. So recently as twenty-four years ago, the whole of its base, and part of the shaft, were buried in the soil; and up to that time the ingenuity of the learned was severely tried, in the attempt to find for it a name and origin. One thought it a fragment of the *Græcostasis*; another adjudged it to a temple of Jupiter Custos; and a third urged the claim of Caligula's Bridge; all thus regarding it as a part of some edifice, or, in the language of a modern poet,—

..... a column left alone,  
The tottering remnant of some splendid fane,  
'Scaped from the fury of the bar'rous Gaul,  
Or wasting Time which has the rest o'erthrown.

At length it was thought that possibly the column might originally have been isolated, and thus in itself a complete monument; that, consequently, if the earth at its foot were removed a pedestal might be uncovered with some inscription thereon. The Duchess of Devonshire had recourse to this simple expedient in the year 1813; the base of the column was laid open, and upon it an inscription was found, recording the fact, that a gilt statue was placed upon the top of it in the year 608, in honour of the Emperor Phocas, by *Smaragdus*, Exarch of Italy. "It is singular," says Dr. Burton, "that the name of Phocas himself has been erased, probably by his successor, Heraclius, who deposed and murdered Phocas, A.D. 610." Other words also are obliterated, but all deficiencies have been supplied without much difficulty or uncertainty by the ingenuity of the learned. "The gilded statue, representing a hideous monster," remarks Sir John Hobhouse, "and such as the decayed arts could then furnish,—the style, and even the letters of the inscription,—the shattered repaired column transferred from some other structure, and defaced by rude carving, must have forcibly bespoken the degradation of the Forum, and of the Roman race."

The inscription is extremely complimentary to Phocas,—the worthy rival of the Caligulas and Domitians of the first age of the empire; and Dr. Burton observes, that we may be surprised to read so flattering a tribute to so execrable a tyrant. "Gregory the Great, who was then pope, has also made honourable mention of him in his Epistles, which gives Gibbon occasion to say, that 'the joyful applause with which he salutes the fortune of the assassin, has sullied, with indelible disgrace, the character of the saint.' But we should remember, (which Gibbon does not mention,) that his enormities had been confined to the eastern empire, whereas Italy seems to have been favoured by him. He wrote to Gregory, proposing an orthodox confession of faith, acknowledged the supremacy of the Romish see, was very liberal to the Roman churches, and allowed the Pantheon to be converted to Christian purposes; all which must have been extremely gratifying to a pope in the seventh century, and perhaps we, in the nineteenth, ought to make some allowance for his feelings."

The material of the column is Greek marble; the capital is Corinthian, and the shaft is fluted; the height is forty-six feet two inches, but it stands upon a pyramid of eleven steps, which increases the elevation about eleven feet. It is thought that the pillar itself is much older than the time of Phocas, the inscription refers only to the placing of the statue upon it. There was a pillar erected in the Forum in honour of Claudius, who succeeded the Emperor Gallienus, in the year 268, and on its summit was a statue, which, as has been suggested, may have given place, after the lapse of three centuries and a half, to that of Phocas.

#### THE COMITIUM, OR GRÆCOSTASIS.

ON that side of the Forum which is bounded by the Palatine, and nearly opposite to the arch of Severus, stand three marble columns, whose surpassing beauty is not more remarkable than the keen disputes to which they have given rise. Though but these three columns remain, with the small fragment of the frieze and cornice which they support, "yet there is nothing in Rome," to use the words of Dr. Burton, "so much calculated to inspire us with an idea of

\* Or "Secular Games," celebrated only once in 110 years.

the magnificence of ancient architecture." To settle beyond a doubt, or even with tolerable certainty, to what building they belonged, is a task which has hitherto baffled the most skilful antiquaries;—to collect even the various opinions and arguments which have been urged concerning them, would be a work of some labour to an industrious compiler. They have had so many names assigned to them, and each name found so many decided partisans, that, as Mr. Roscoe well observes, "their only unexceptionable title has become that of 'The Disputed Columns.'"

It was long the prevalent opinion, and it is one not yet altogether abandoned,—that these columns are a part of the temple which Romulus vowed to Jupiter *Stator*\*, and in which Cicero convened that meeting of the senate, wherein he delivered the first of his celebrated orations against Catiline. The "Temple of Jupiter Stator" was long the popular name which it bore; by this it is described in nearly all our books of travels which are twenty years old, and even in some of a later date. But the site of this edifice may be sought with more propriety upon some part of the declivity of the Palatine, whereas the edifice to which the three columns belonged, seems evidently to have stood wholly within the Forum. Another claimant is the "Temple of Castor," which, certainly, was in the Forum, and sufficiently near to the Palatine to be converted by Caligula into the vestibule of his palace; but for this we have already assigned a different position, when speaking of the public buildings of the ancient Forum. These two competitors being removed from the field, the claims of a third may be urged with more force; this is the building which we described as having been called indifferently the *Comitium*, or the *Græcostasis*, from the circumstance of its having been formed by the union of two separate buildings known by those names. The title of the *Comitium* to the possession of the three columns, has been gradually gaining strength of late years, and at present it seems to be more generally admitted among the learned than that of any other edifice. It depends, however, to a great extent, upon the identity of certain adjacent ruins on the south, with the remains of the *Curia*, or Senate-house; if that identity can be regarded as sufficiently established, then the position of the edifice of which the three columns formed a part, will correspond exactly with the position of the *Comitium*, or *Græcostasis*, as indicated by ancient writers. One of the strongest arguments adduced in favour of the supposition, that these two groups of ruins are the remains of the *Comitium* and *Curia* respectively, has been derived from the circumstance, that in the middle of the sixteenth century, a great many fragments of the *Fasti Consulares*, or *Capitolini*†, were dug up in their immediate vicinity, and in the year 1819, when excavations were made in the neighbourhood of the three columns, a still further portion of fragments was discovered. It is certainly not actually known, that these *Fasti* were deposited either in the *Comitium* or the *Curia*; but of all the public buildings in the Forum, one of those two would have been the most appropriate to keep them in.

Besides the three opinions here noticed concerning the edifice to which the three columns belonged, there are others which it is unnecessary to mention. "Whatever it was," says the judicious author of the *Letters of an Architect*, who thought it, "although deficient in the usual number of columns at the sides, to have been a temple," when he wrote in 1817,—"Whatever it was, we may fairly pronounce it to have been the most perfect building of which any remains now exist in Rome. I do not mean the most beautiful, for in that tastes may differ; but that in which science, skill, and attention, have been most carefully and invariably employed in the design, in the drawing, and in the execution." The same writer, after remarking upon its freedom from faults which are visible in the execution of the temple of Jupiter Tonans, the Pantheon, and others, says that "there are no other buildings we can put into

\* Or the *Stayer*, one of the many epithets of this heathen divinity. He obtained it from having once stayed the flight of the Romans, when they had been driven by the Sabines to the very gate of their infant city on the Palatine. Romulus invoked the aid of the god, and vowed him a temple on the very spot, in the event of its being granted.

† The *Consular*, or *Capitoline Fasti*,—that is to say, "list," or "register." The fragments in question form a chronological record, with few exceptions, complete, of the kings, consuls, and other great magistrates of Rome, as also of the triumphs celebrated for each year, from the time of Romulus down to the year 724 of the city, or 30 B.C. They are engraved in marble, and have been more than once published; they are now preserved in the Capitoline Museum.

comparison with it, unless it be the Forum of Trajan, of which we have not sufficient remains to enable us fairly to institute a parallel. Of the general design, indeed, we have hardly in any case materials for judging, but the plan and disposition of this temple bear at least evidence of a careful consideration. The building is of white marble, so that the substance, as well as the workmanship, contributed to the effect of magnificence. The entablature is finely proportioned. It is decidedly Roman in taste, which some persons, perhaps, may think a defect, and others consider a beauty."

The material of these columns is white marble; they are fluted, and their order is the Corinthian,—of which, indeed, they are thought to have furnished the finest model upon the revival of classic architecture in Italy. Their whole height, including the base and the capital, is about 48 feet 4 inches in English measure; the diameter of the shaft at the base is about 4 feet 9 inches, and at the top 4 feet 2 inches. The flutings of the shaft are the largest to be seen in Rome, being very nearly nine inches across. "It might be conjectured" says Dr. Burton, "that considerable force had been used to destroy this temple; or an earthquake may, perhaps, have produced the effect; for it may be observed that some of the blocks of which the shafts are composed have received a violent wrench so as actually to force them out of their places and destroy the continuity of the fluting. The same has been observed in the pillars of the Temple of Theseus, the Parthenon, and Propylæa at Athens." The great height of these columns, in proportion to their thickness, imparts to them a slenderness and delicacy of appearance, exciting in the mind of the beholder something of an impression of fragility; and this feeling is not diminished by the sight of the iron bands which encircle them towards their summit, and the connecting bars which stretch from the central one to those at the sides, as though it had been felt that singly their stability was precarious, and their united strength was required to withstand the assaults of time and nature.

The information derived from the excavations of late years has enabled the antiquaries to determine with some degree of exactness the general arrangement of the edifice to which these columns belonged. "In continuation with the three columns," says the Rev. Mr. Burgess, "the foundation-line of the basement is indicated by the mouldings which were found upon the spot, and have been adjusted upon the original level." The direction of the length of the building was parallel to the base of the Palatine; thus one of its sides was turned towards that hill, while the other looked upon the Forum and towards the Capitol. "The space so designated will just admit three columns more, so that to make up the thirteen, (the original number on each side,) seven more must be reckoned on a line produced the other way. This will bring the extremity a little within the habitations joining the large brick ruin; the end, or side corresponding to the front, will then be carried across at a right angle, allowing sufficient space for eight columns, (the number in the front,) and the rectangle contained by these two lines, measuring 160 feet by 90, will be completed." It is upon the south-eastern side or that turned towards the Palatine that the three columns still remaining must be placed. The south-western end was that which approached and perhaps joined the Senate-house, the front of which thus looked upon that side of the Forum of which a part is seen in the right of our engraving. This front had a portico of eight columns; "the steps which led to the portico," says Dr. Burton, "have been discovered facing the temple of Antoninus and Faustina,"—which, as the reader will recollect, indicates very nearly the eastern angle of the Forum.

From this description it will be apparent, that the *Comitium*, or *Græcostasis*, must have been one of the largest buildings of its style in Ancient Rome; it occupied a considerable part of the side of the Forum on which it stood, stretching from the Senate-house in the middle of that side, to within a short distance of the eastern angle. The reader must be careful not to confound its three remaining columns with those which are seen in a triangular group on the declivity of the Capitol, in the left of our engraving; those belong to the temple of Jupiter Tonans, or "the Thunderer."

#### OTHER REMAINS IN THE FORUM.

BESIDES the ruins which we have described, there are others in the Forum, which always occupy the attention of the traveller, but to which we can only briefly refer. The



remains of the Curia, or Senate-house, have been already noticed; they stand near the modern church of *S. Maria Liberatrice*, and present only masses of solid brick walls, forming three sides of a quadrangle, of which, the fourth, towards the Forum, is wanting. These walls are blended with the houses of the Campo Vaccino, but not so as to prevent the spectator from distinguishing clearly the form of the ancient edifice; the space which it occupied, is supposed to have been a square of about 120 feet, exclusive of the portico. Their right to the appellation of "the remains of the Senate-house," has been disputed, as a matter of course; and some have thought them a part of the palace of Caligula, which he extended from the Palatine into the Forum. "What then," says Mr. Burgess, "are the probabilities that the ruin in question directs us to the spot where the senate assembled? First, the brick-work is conformable to the time of Augustus; secondly, the form of the edifice is adapted to the purpose; thirdly, if antiquaries are at all correct in the general outlines of the Forum, and we assume our third (southern) angle at the church of *S. Teodoro*, the situation answers to the few hints left us in ancient authors, pointing out the Curia as in a central part of the Forum."

The church of *San Teodoro* here mentioned, is itself, in part, an ancient building, which some call the temple of *Vesta*, and others, Nibby among them, that of *Romulus*. It is a *rotunda* or round temple; the material is brick, and from the style, the period of its construction is generally referred to the decline of the empire. "Among the arguments used to prove it to have been the ancient temple of *Romulus*," says Mr. Woods, "or at least to have occupied its site, is a fancied similarity between *St. Theodore* (usually called *San Toto*), and the founder of the Roman state; and the custom still existing of carrying to it sick children for the recovery of their health, since it appears that the same practice prevailed in ancient times with respect to the temple of *Romulus*. This argument is of some value, since the Romans still retain many local heathen superstitions." Middleton notices this superstitious custom of the modern Romans, and traces it to their pagan ancestors. "From the tradition of the wonderful escape which *Romulus* had in this very place when exposed in his infancy to perish in the Tiber, as soon as he came to be a god he was looked upon as singularly propitious to the health and safety of young children: from which notion it became a practice for nurses and mothers to present their sickly infants before his shrine in this little temple, in confidence of a cure or relief by his favour; now when this temple was converted afterwards into a church, lest any piece of superstition should be lost, or the people think themselves sufferers by the change in losing the benefit of such a protection for their children, care was taken to find out in the place of the heathen god, a Christian saint who had been exposed too in his infancy, and found by chance like *Romulus*; and for the same reason might be presumed to be just as fond of children, as their old deity had been; and thus the worship paid to *Romulus* being now transferred to *Theodorus*, the old superstition still subsists, and the custom of presenting children at this shrine continues to this day without intermission; of which I myself have been a witness, having seen, as oft as I looked into this church, ten or a dozen women decently dressed, each with a child in her lap, sitting with silent reverence before the altar of the saint, in expectation of his miraculous influence on the health of the infant."

Another strong argument to the same effect, has been derived from the fact, that the bronze figure of a wolf with two children sucking, which we have already mentioned as being now in the museum of the Capitol, was preserved in this church so late as the sixteenth century; and a Greek writer, who flourished in the first century before the Christian era, speaks distinctly of a temple of *Romulus*, at the foot of the Palatine, "in which is a wolf suckling two children, an ancient work in brass."

The imaginary line which we have drawn from the church of *S. Teodoro* under the Palatine to the church *Della Consolazione* under the Capitol, in order to mark the south-western boundary of the Forum, will pass through a mass of modern houses, among which there is nothing to be observed but some ruins assigned by Nibby to a temple of *Julius Cæsar*. The buildings which bounded the Forum on the north-western or Capitoline side, belong, properly speaking, to that hill; the temple of *Jupiter Tonans*, of which the three remaining columns are seen in the left of our engraving, stood some little distance from the Forum.

Of its north-eastern boundary, or that which stretched from the arch of *Severus* to the temple of *Antoninus* and *Faustina*; and the modern substitute for which is partly shown in the line of building upon the right of our engraving, but little remains. Referring to our view, the reader will perceive immediately behind the column of *Phœas* the plain front of a building surmounted by a pediment; this belongs now to the church of *S. Adriano*, and is said to be a part of the ancient *Basilica Æmilia*, which was erected in the time of *Augustus*. "There are good reasons," says Dr. Burton, "for thinking that the *Basilica* stood near this spot: but Nibby supposes the front of *S. Adriano*, which is of brick, to be later by some centuries." The bronze gate which now forms the principal entrance to *St. John's Lateran*, once belonged to this church. "This frightful old church," says the author of *Rome in the Nineteenth Century*, "nobody but an antiquary would ever have suspected of being anything better than a barn. Yet on the strength of the old tottering brick wall which forms its front, it has been pronounced to be the remains of one of the most splendid works of republican Rome!"

Upon the left of the church of *S. Adriano*, the reader will perceive a domed edifice, which is the church of *S. Martina*, or as it is sometimes called, the church of the Academy of *St. Luke* (the Roman academy of fine arts), to which it is attached. It is altogether modern, but is supposed to occupy the site of the ancient *Secretarium Senatus* before mentioned. Upon the right of the church of *S. Adriano*, and consequently beyond the limits of our view, a succession of modern houses extends beyond the imaginary point which has been fixed upon for the eastern angle of the Forum, to the temple of *Antoninus* and *Faustina*, in its immediate vicinity. This temple stood without the limits of the ancient Forum; but it will be convenient shortly to describe it here. The inscription "To the divine *Antoninus*, and to the divine *Faustina*, by a decree of the senate," still remaining upon the frieze, serves fortunately to identify it; but, as if it were fated that nothing in Rome should entirely escape dispute, we are still in doubt as to the persons in whose honour the temple was erected. For it happens oddly enough that both the *Antonines* had wives of the same name; so that whether the inscription refers to *Antoninus Pius* and his wife *Faustina*, or to *Marcus Aurelius Antoninus*, and his wife *Faustina*, is a matter of uncertainty. Nibby decides in favour of the latter, and Dr. Burton inclines to the same opinion. A considerable portion of the ancient building has been preserved; the principal part is a portico of ten Corinthian columns, six in front and two on each side. The whole height of these columns is sixty-three Roman palms, or a little more than forty-six English feet; the bases and capitals are of white marble, and the shafts of a single block of that species of marble which the Italians call *cipollino*,—"from its laminous composition resembling onions," (or *cipolle*), according to Dr. Burton. The portico was formerly buried to more than half the height of the columns; but these are now laid open to their bases. "They do not present any great appearance of beauty, as the marble of which they are formed is a very indifferent sort." In front of this temple passed the celebrated *Via Sacra*, or Sacred Way of the Romans, along which the triumphal processions came from the direction of the Coliseum, till they entered the Forum by the arch of *Fabius*, which though no longer existing, is known to have stood close to the temple of *Antoninus* and *Faustina*. The bases of the columns of the portico are seventeen feet above the level of that way; and the ascent to it was anciently by a flight of twenty-one steps. The body of the temple has been worked into the modern church of *San Lorenzo in Miranda*; the Italian word *miranda* means "wonderful," and Vasi suggests that the church may have derived "its surname" from the "wonderful monuments of antiquity surrounding it."

The engraving on p. 40, affords a partial view of the balustrade at the top of the principal ascent to the modern Capitol. In ancient times, the only ascents to the Capitol were upon the side bounded by the Forum, or the eastern side; at the present day, the principal ascent to the Capitol is from the opposite direction; that is to say, upon the side looking towards the west, and bounded by the great plain (originally the *Campus Martius*), into which the modern city has slipped down from off her seven hills. The principal part of ancient Rome lay eastward of the Capitoline hill; and in that direction, therefore, it was then ascended; the principal part of modern Rome lies westward of the

Capitoline hill, and in that direction, therefore, it is now chiefly ascended. "A single flight of steps, or rather an inclined plane," says Simond, "brings you at once to the top of the mount, and to a sort of landing-place of no great extent, regularly built on three sides, and by corruption called *Campidoglio*. Two antique lions of basalt guard the front of the stairs, and two naked colossi the top; the latter were dug out on the banks of the Tiber, 250 years ago, and have since been stuck up here. Each holds a clumsy prancing horse, colossal too, and yet scarcely reaching the waist of his gigantic master! These figures, which are of very indifferent workmanship, have been called *Castor* and *Pollux*. On a line with them, are two mutilated trophies, then two indifferent statues of the Cæsars, and finally two small columns. All these things symmetrically arranged,—all antique certainly, still are foreign to the situation they now occupy; one of the columns excepted, which appears somewhat better entitled to its place, being the miliary stone, No. 1., on the *Via Appia* (Appian Way), formerly placed at the end of the first mile, and now at the beginning. This practical anticipation put me in mind of the idle debates which took place in the year 1800, on the question, whether we were already in the nineteenth century, or still in the eighteenth."

The balustrade, of which our readers see a part, forms one side of the square, or *piazza*, into which the ascent leads,—the *Piazza del Campidoglio*, as it is called; the three other sides are surrounded with the principal buildings

of the modern Capitol, which we shall describe hereafter. The two side buildings are the works of Michael Angelo; one of them is the Capitoline museum, and the other is the palace of the Conservators. "An equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius found in the Forum, was also placed here by Michael Angelo, who is said to have admired it, and therefore it is admired,—the spirit of the animal, at least, notwithstanding its many defects. The shabby little house standing in the hollow on the right-hand side going up to Campidoglio was once Michael Angelo's."

Between the figures of the two horses, the reader will perceive in the distance, the line of a second ascent which commences at the same point as the great one, and leads up to the modern church of *Ara Celi*, upon the left of the *Piazza del Campidoglio*. This church occupies the site of one of the temples of Jupiter, which are supposed to have formerly stood upon the two summits of the Capitoline hill; which of them, however, is yet a disputed question, for antiquaries have not agreed as to which of the summits is that anciently called the *arx*, or citadel, and which that called more especially *Capitolium*, from its containing the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, and the other principal buildings. We shall speak more at length upon this subject, in our next paper on Rome.

The ascent seen in page 33, is that already spoken of as rising from the Forum, near the track of the ancient *Clivus Asyli*: it leads to a corner of the square which the other enters, but of course in an opposite direction.



PRINCIPAL ASCENT TO THE MODERN CAPITOL.